

HISTORICAL INDEX

New York Common Council Manuals

1841-1870

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HISTORICAL INDEX
TO
“NEW YORK COMMON COUNCIL MANUALS”

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NEW YORK (N.Y.) ...
HISTORICAL INDEX

TO

THE MANUALS OF THE CORPORATION
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

("VALENTINE'S MANUALS")

1841 to 1870

CONSISTING OF

TWO THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE
REFERENCES



NEW YORK

FRANCIS P. HARPER

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INDEX

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FRANCIS P. HARPER.

INTRODUCTION.

THE volumes of the "Manuals of the Corporation of the City of New York," which is the full title of what are generally known as "Valentine's Manuals," contain, besides the statistics and lists of city officers, a mass of "Historical" matter, consisting of extracts from old city records and old newspapers, descriptions of old maps and views, reminiscences of old residents, etc., interspersed with a lot of miscellaneous matter, some of which does not relate to New York at all, strung together without any apparent order or system, just as they happened to come into the hands of the printer. This forms a queer patchwork of rather uneven value, filling a little over four thousand pages in twenty-six of the twenty-eight volumes, of which a complete set consists.

They also contain some 800 illustrations and maps, most of them of great interest at this time, distributed through the volumes with the same disregard of system, and if possible adding to the confusion by having descriptions in one volume while the prints are in another.

To this add a variety of sizes, running through the whole gamut from 18mos to 8vos, the first three being 18mos, the next four 16mos, then eighteen 12mos, winding up with three 8vos; complement this with repetitions both of prints and of articles, and you have a literary mess which it would be hard to equal and which has always been the despair of the student. The only thing in which these volumes maintained an unbroken uniformity is their absolute lack of plan or system.

Mr. Valentine, who is supposed to have edited the "Manuals," was clerk of the Common Council during the publication of all but the last three, and, although an

INTRODUCTION.

amiable gentleman, was not, as is generally believed, a great historical scholar, but gathered what he could find for his books without any very searching investigation as to its merit. Fortunately for him and for us, among his advisers and helpers were a number of very excellent authorities on our old history, such as William Kelby, H. B. Dawson, Dr. Francis, and a few others, to whom their historical value is chiefly due.

During a number of years of a somewhat close study of the older history of the city, I often found the "Manuals" useful as guides, so that I accumulated quite a large number of references to the various volumes, and when a portion of these was accidentally destroyed I determined to go carefully over the whole mass again. The 2325 references which form this index are the result of this second examination. The first column to the right of the page refers to the date of the manual, the second to the pages.

It will be necessary to say that these references are mainly to the subject-matter and not to the long lists of officers which occur there, as most of these can be found in the alphabetical list in the volume for 1870.

Of course the index was made for my own use at the time, but at the request of Mr. Harper, who believed it would interest others sufficiently to warrant him in printing it, I cheerfully turned it over to him and will be well repaid if it serves to stimulate and keep alive that interest in old New York which now seems to be so general.

O. H.

MT. VERNON, N. Y., Nov. 15, 1899.

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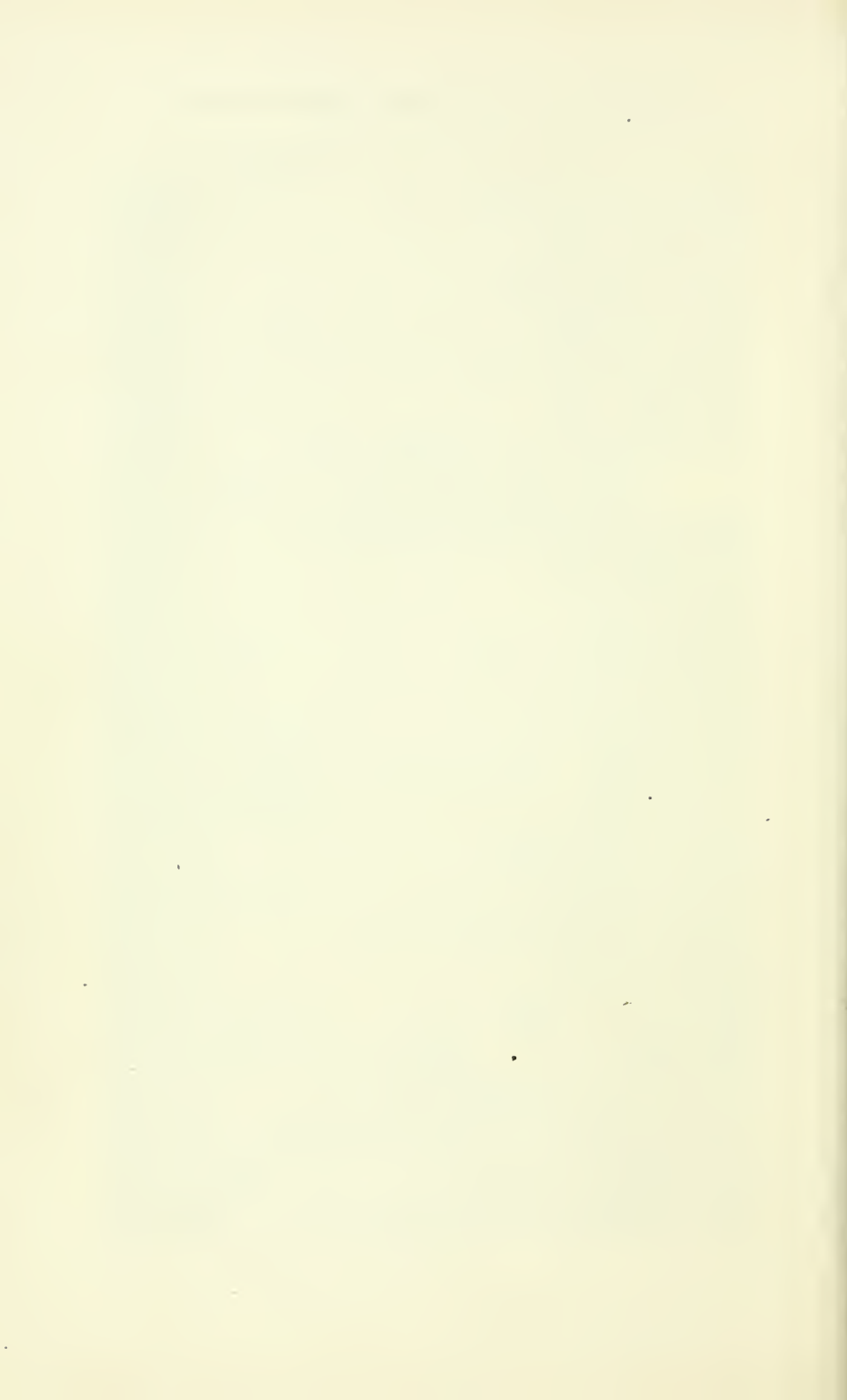
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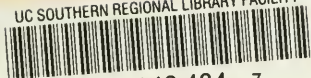
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